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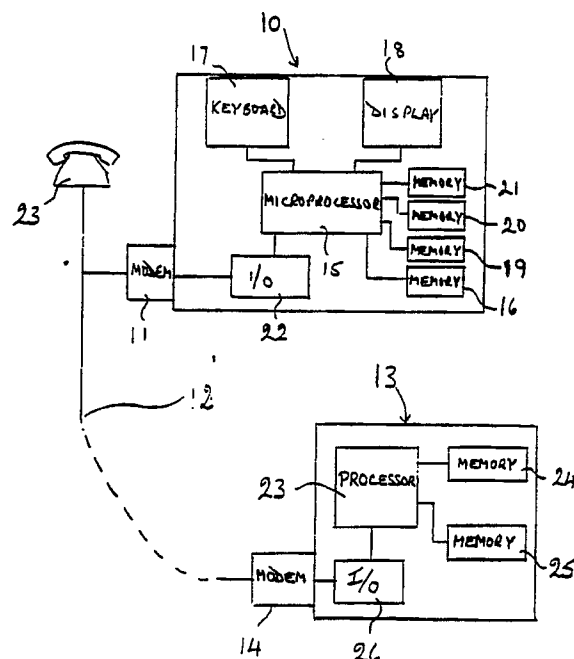
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(54) **Franking system.**

(57) Credit in a credit register (19,20) of a franking meter (10) is reset by telephone communication with a resetting terminal (13). A request for a selected credit amount is transmitted from the meter apparatus (10) to the terminal (13) and in response the terminal (13) interrogates the meter (10) to establish identity of the meter (10). The terminal (13) locks the meter (10) to prevent operation of the meter (10) for franking while the resetting takes place. The terminal (13) checks the validity of the reset request with customer records stored in the terminal (13) and if valid transmits a reset signal which includes the credit reset amount and a pseudo-random number (TID) to enable the meter (10) to reset its credit register. Upon completion of the resetting the meter (10) sends a request including a random number for unlocking of the meter (10). The terminal (13) requests the register values from the meter (10), each request including a random number. The meter (10) transmits the register values together with the random number to the terminal (13). If the value and random number are correct, the terminal (13) unlocks the meter (10) by sending an unlock signal which includes the TID and random number.





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DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT			
Category	Citation of document with indication, where appropriate, of relevant passages	Relevant to claim	CLASSIFICATION OF THE APPLICATION (Int. Cl.5)
Y	US-A-3792446 (MC FIGGINS ET AL.) * column 3, line 3 - column 6, line 48 * * column 9, lines 1 - 67; figures *	1, 2, 4, 8-10	G07B17/02
A	---	5-7, 11	
Y	FR-A-2592509 (PITNEY BOWES) * page 17, line 22 - page 22, line 3; figures *	1, 8-10	
A	---	5, 11	
Y	EP-A-0018081 (PITNEY BOWES) * page 2, line 17 - page 4, line 12 * * page 5, line 24 - page 8, line 10; figures *	2, 4	
A	---	1, 3, 5-7, 10, 11	
A	US-A-4097923 (ECKERT JR ET AL.) * column 1, line 31 - column 3, line 37; figures *	1, 8-11	
A	GB-A-2080203 (PITNEY BOWES) * page 2, line 26 - page 3, line 72; figures *	1, 3, 8	TECHNICAL FIELDS SEARCHED (Int. Cl.5) G07B G07F
The present search report has been drawn up for all claims			
Place of search THE HAGUE		Date of completion of the search 09 OCTOBER 1990	Examiner RAKOTON DRAJAONA C.
CATEGORY OF CITED DOCUMENTS X : particularly relevant if taken alone Y : particularly relevant if combined with another document of the same category A : technological background O : non-written disclosure P : intermediate document T : theory or principle underlying the invention E : earlier patent document, but published on, or after the filing date D : document cited in the application L : document cited for other reasons & : member of the same patent family, corresponding document			